

5th June saw a return of wet and windy, but fairly mild conditions, when we travelled east to Speyside and visited the excellent Kincaig Wildlife Park of Scottish animals. We stopped on the way back beside some of the marshy areas of the Spey valley where we had seen *A. cardamines* in the past, and, as quickly as possible in the steady downpour, collected a small harvest of cuckoo flower with the delightful orange ova attached.

Before leaving the area the following morning, we took another look at the best *palaemon* colony. Several of these attractive little butterflies were darting about in the bright sunshine; but in spite of careful observation I could find no females ovipositing, and thus failed in one of my objects, which was to determine the preferred foodplant of the Highland race.

On our way south to Oban that afternoon, we stopped at a favourite site in "Apuinn uaine" where *E. aurinia* is normally abundant, but to our disappointment saw only two specimens in just over an hour. This pretty butterfly was out in fair numbers the following day, in a locality south of Oban, but was also quite worn at a date when the species is normally in its first flush in Argyll. The large and bright, univoltine *Polyommatus icarus* Rott. was just appearing in the same locality.

The heatwave continued, and on Iona on 9th June, there was a profusion of *Pieris brassicae* L. and a surprise *Vanessa atalanta* L.—the first of the season. The next day *Coenonympha tullia* Mull. was well out (about two weeks early) on A' Mhoine Mhor, near Lochgilphead—indeed some males were already showing signs of age. In the same area *E. aurinia* was either already over or below observation numbers in what used to be a strong colony.

Southward bound on 11th June, we stopped overnight in Westmorland again and the next morning visited Meathop Moss. In this contradictory season it was hardly a surprise to find the southern *tullia* well behind their Scottish counterparts. Only a few newly emerged males were flying in the very hot sunshine in a section of the moss rapidly being invaded by birch and pine scrub. A pair of long ears in a birch bush belonged to a small, staring Roe fawn, which refused to move even when I approached to within a few yards; and, a bit further on, an equally small but less intrepid fox club was flushed out of some thick heather.

The M6 enabled us to get home in record time the same day. Various commitments over the next few weeks restricted entomological excursions to localities near to home, and these, in the main, proved unproductive.

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HIBERNATED VANESSA ATALANTA L. IN STAFFORDSHIRE.—On 29th February, 1976, an example of *V. atalanta* was seen on the wing on Cannock Chase. At such an early date this must surely be an instance of successful hibernation and the same is probably true of another butterfly seen in the Coombes Valley in the north of Staffordshire in April.—R. G. WARREN, 32 Whitmore Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.